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FIFTEEN YEARS OF EXTENSION WORK

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

A radio talk by Mr. C. W. Warburton, Director of Extension Work, delivered through Station WRC and 31 other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, Eastern Standard Time, September 4, 1929.

Fifteen years ago cooperation between the Federal Government and the States in extension work in agriculture and home economics was authorized by Act of Congress. On May 8, 1914, the President approved what is known as the Smith-Lever Act which provides for annual appropriations by the Federal Government for cooperation with the States, through their colleges of agriculture, in the maintenance of an agricultural extension service. For several years prior to that time the Federal Government had been making appropriations for extension work, and contributions toward it also had been made by some of the States and by educational and commercial agencies. In 1914, at the time of the passage of the Smith-Lever Act, certain States were already well provided with extension agents, particularly county agricultural agents. There had been no uniformity in the development of the system, however, and in some of the States no provision had been made for it.

In 1914, the Federal appropriation for extension work was about $1\frac{1}{2}$ million dollars, to which the States added a million, and the counties and organizations of farmers or business men slightly more than another million. The total extension budget at that time was \$3,600,000. Last year, the Federal appropriation was slightly less than 9 million dollars, whereas State appropriations were $6\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and the counties and farm and business organizations contributed $7\frac{1}{2}$ millions. The extension budget for the United States is now 23 million dollars.

In 1914, the county agricultural agents numbered about 900, while about 350 counties, practically all in the South, had the service of home demonstration agents. The administrative staff and the specialists in various subjects such as dairying, crop production and food preservation, brought the total up to 1,800 workers. This year the total number of extension workers in the United States is 5,700, of whom 2,300 are county agricultural agents, and 1,200 are home demonstration agents. A staff of 1,100 specialists in a wide range of agricultural and home economics subjects strengthens the work of these resident county agents. The number of members of 4-H clubs is nearly three times what it was in 1914, and the standard of club work is much higher.

The extension service is now a great public agency the job of which is to carry the results of the work of the Department of Agriculture and the State agricultural colleges and experiment stations to the farms and into the farm homes where the people live. These agents do not devote their time to giving personal service to individuals but rather to the training of groups through demonstrations, meetings, publications and other means. In their extension activities the agents are assisted by 150,000 men and women who are leaders of clubs or groups of adults, and by 58,000 volunteer local leaders of boys' and girls' clubs.

(over)

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME
BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, ESQ. OF BOSTON

IN TWO VOLUMES.
THE FIRST VOLUME.
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT TO THE YEAR 1700.
THE SECOND VOLUME.
FROM THE YEAR 1700 TO THE PRESENT TIME.
BOSTON: PRINTED BY S. KNEELAND, AT THE SIGN OF THE ANCHOR, IN THE NORTHERN PART OF NASSAU-STREET, NEAR THE CORNER OF NASSAU AND BEACON-STREETS. 1786.

TO THE HONORABLE SENATE OF THE MASSACHUSETTS, IN GENERAL COURT ASSEMBLED, IN SENATE CHAMBER, THE 10TH OF JANUARY, 1786.
PRESENTED BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, ESQ. OF BOSTON.

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The extension program is not planned by the State college of agriculture or the Federal Department and handed to the county agent for execution. It is formulated by the local people themselves in consultation with their extension agents, after a full and frank discussion of the most important problems of the farm and home. In these meetings, interested bankers and other business men may participate. Specialists from the college may be called in to give their advice and to suggest solutions of problems based on the results of research or the experience of others. In the final analysis, however, the determination of the extension program is in the hands of the men and women on the farms.

The demonstration is the keynote of the extension program. The most convincing evidence is that which we see. If a farmer sees a neighbor growing alfalfa successfully under the direction of the county agent, he is much more likely to try to grow alfalfa himself than if he simply reads about alfalfa growing in a bulletin or farm paper, or if he hears some one tell about it in a talk at a meeting. Last year, 851,000 result demonstrations were conducted by adults, and junior club members completed 883,000 projects each of which was itself a demonstration. During the year extension agents visited 780,000 different farms and 251,000 farm homes.

The first great fight of the extension service was against the cotton boll weevil. In fact, the fight on the boll weevil was the job which brought the extension service into being when Dr. Seaman A. Knapp began his demonstration work in Texas in 1904. It was evident that the boll weevil could not be checked or fully controlled, so the problem was to grow cotton in spite of the weevil by changing agricultural practices. Through the choice of varieties, use of fertilizers, proper planting and cultivation, and the use of poisons to kill the weevil, farmers, largely through the advice of the extension agents, have learned how to beat the weevil and produce fair crops of cotton.

One of the striking results of extension work is the increase in the acreage of corn in the Western States where a few years ago it was thought that this crop could not be grown successfully. The introduction of corn into the West has helped to stabilize livestock production, has added a cultivated crop to the rotation, and has been an important factor in controlling weeds. In 1914, Montana grew 50,000 acres of corn, while by 1928 the acreage had more than doubled. Similar increases took place in Colorado and several of the other Western States largely through demonstrations conducted by extension agents in the preparation of the land, cultivation of the crop, and selection of proper varieties. In the Corn Belt, much good work has been done in the selection of varieties, selection of suitable seed for planting, testing of seed for germination, and the control of diseases.

Similarly, extension agents have done much to assist farmers in the production of other crops. For instance, the discovery of the formaldehyde treatment for the control of oat smut was made by Professor J. C. Arthur of Purdue University in Indiana in 1890. Twenty-five years later, when an extension agent was appointed in the county adjoining the one in which Purdue University is located, he could not find a single farmer using this treatment. Within a few years, as the result of campaigns conducted by the extension agent, more than half of the farmers were treating their oats with formaldehyde.



The rapid increase in alfalfa acreage in the Eastern and North Central States and the wise use of sweet clover as a green manuring and pasture crop are largely due to the efforts of extension agents.

Aid has been given to livestock producers in the formation of cow testing associations to weed out unprofitable animals, in assisting State and Federal sanitary agencies in the eradication and control of livestock diseases such as bovine tuberculosis, tick fever, and hog cholera, and in advocating better methods of feeding and management. Not all of the attention of county agricultural agents, however, has been given to crop and livestock production. They have rendered assistance to groups of farmers in the formation of cooperative purchasing and marketing associations, have made available to farmers information on price trends of agricultural products, intentions to plant crops and to breed livestock, probable demand for agricultural products, and other economic information. They have helped farmers standardize their products and adapt their agriculture to meet market demands. Many cooperatives would never have been started had it not been for the efforts of extension workers, and some of them owe their very existence to the extension forces.

The farm home has not been neglected. Hundreds of trained home demonstration workers have assisted women in the rural districts in rearranging their household tasks, in replanning their kitchens and other rooms, and in better management of their homes to save labor and to make time available for recreation and improvement. They have taught farm women how to preserve fruits and vegetables, have given them information on proper diet for different members of the family, and have aided in raising the standards of rural living. Assistance given to farm women and girls in the construction, selection and care of clothing has more than any other one thing brought about the present-day condition when it is impossible to determine by a woman's dress whether she comes from the city or the country.

While much of the work of the extension agents has been with adults, hundreds of thousands of rural boys and girls have received training in the 4-H clubs. In these clubs the boys have been taught to raise a dairy calf or a litter of pigs, or to grow an acre of corn or cotton under the most improved methods, while the girls have learned to make their own clothes, furnish their own rooms, or to can fruits and vegetables. Every one of the several hundred thousand club members has conducted at least one useful project. In addition, they have developed pride of ownership, cooperative spirit, and have learned to be better citizens. They work together, play together, and find greater joy in country life. In them lies our hope for the future. In the training of 5,000,000 4-H club members in the past fifteen years, more than in any other one thing, the Extension Service has justified its existence.

